

**Title I Community Advisory Committee**

**October 21, 2014**

**MCPS Admin Bldg, Rm 14**

**6:00 to 7:30 PM**

**Attendees:** Heather Davis Schmidt, Amanda Dellwo, Sindie Kennedy, Connie Sage, Natalie Jaeger, , Seena Demmons, Matt Quinlan, and Stephanie Morrow (David Rott, Erica Ramsay, Julie Robitaille and Brian Bessette showed for the meeting but were excused by Heather)

Heather welcomed everyone and reviewed the agenda. Heather asked for introductions. Everyone in attendance introduced themselves. Heather explained the ERD responsibilities and regions. She explained she is the director of Title I and provided some history. Several years ago Heather was a Title I Coordinator. Heather explained that it felt like they were making decisions between two people that impacted a lot of people in the MCPS community and beyond. When she became an Executive Regional Director, she felt they needed to modify how decisions were made and this led to the development of the Community Advisory Committee.

Heather reviewed the purpose/guiding question and long-term goals and that everything that we are doing in Title I needs to align to the bigger picture.

Heather reviewed the short-term goals as:

- 1) Defining Community Advisory Purpose. Part of what this committee has accomplished has been fine tuning the feeder pattern process for allocating Title I funds and have also resolved other issues. Heather stated that the ideas, experiences and thoughts that are brought to the committee were appreciated.
- 2) Title I Schoolwide vs Targeted Programs
- 3) Understand how to read the Title I budget.

Heather reviewed the Collective Agreement. Heather asked if anyone had any suggested changes. Everyone agreed on the Collective Agreement.

The next topic Heather discussed was understanding Schoolwide versus Targeted. All elementary and middle schools are Schoolwide programs. There are 17 schools in the district and the Title I schools are: Lowell, Franklin, Hawthorne, Russell, C.S. Porter, Seeley-Swan, Hellgate and Big Sky. The Non-Title I schools are: Chief Charlo, Cold Springs, Lewis & Clark, Paxson, Rattlesnake, Meadow Hill, Washington, and Sentinel. Willard is an alternative High School program. It is not a school.

All K-8 and Seeley-Swan are considered Schoolwide programs. The allocation can be used in a more creative way than can be used in a Targeted school. In order to be Schoolwide, the poverty rate has to be at 40% or above and it has to stay there consistently. There is added work that needs to be done to be a Schoolwide. A Targeted program means the poverty level is below 40% and only certain Targeted students are considered Title I. When we allocate money to schools, we allocate based on the number

at poverty level. At Targeted schools, the Title I services are based on academic needs, not based on poverty level. The richest student in the building could receive Title I services.

At the non-Title I school, FIT students can receive Title I services as well as those students that have been identified as neglected or delinquent. Sindie Kennedy does a lot of work with the non-Title I schools. We have a non-Title I principal that sits on this committee as well. This is to help us consider services in non-Title I, but also to keep perspective on those schools that are on the "bubble" because they are high poverty. The committee has decided to focus on providing Title I allocations to those schools with the highest level of poverty.

There are district allocations and school allocations. The schools have their own budgets and they can choose how best to use their Title I funds within the Federal Guidelines.

The district also has additional funding such as Title I, Part D. This budget is not part of the discussion tonight. These are students that are transitioning from various interventions like the juvenile detention center, a runaway, or a student that is staying at the Attention Home. Seena is an Instructional Coach and her salary is funded at the district level. Schools build their own plans based on their own allocations, staffing, and professional development desires.

Heather reviewed the budget. The K-8 budget reflects a projected amount. It is not the actual amount received, but this is a version that is easy to explain. Heather explained AYP. Students that are attending Title I schools, where the schools have not been performing academically, they are put into performance status. Parents have an option to choose to have their students attend a different school in the district that could provide the same services but is doing better. Because of NCLB, all of the schools are not performing. Letters were sent out to parents that offered them a choice, but actually you don't have a choice. Everyone is in the same boat in terms of achievement scores of schools.

The note next to AYP indicates we will use the funds to pay for FRC/FIT coordinator salaries. We know we won't be using that money. Previously, we asked building principals to include in their buildings but this is the first cut principals make when faced with painful cuts. If we pull it out of the districts, then that would be fewer funds that will go to the buildings. We are committed to keeping these positions because if we give the funds to the buildings, SES (they are vendors that can serve students who are receiving FREE AND REDUCED meals and attending a school that has reached a level of improvement status). They receive a certain dollar amount so they can receive academic support from a vendor. SES is only for FREE AND REDUCED students. Sylvan provides the majority of services to our students. That is a required 10% set-aside. We do use some of these funds but we anticipate around \$50K will not be used. These funds will be used for summer programs or professional development.

The next line item is homeless with 77 in parentheses. At that time, 77 was the number of homeless students in our non-Title I schools. If you take 77 and go to the bottom where the per pupil student amount is \$694.35. \$53,900 is what is allocated.

Stephanie asked about Title I services in non-Title I schools for homeless students. Heather explained we

had McKinney-Vento tutors. We sub-contracted this service. They hired a volunteer coordinator who recruited volunteers. Most of the volunteers were University students that were recruited after school started and left before school ended.

This year, we are in the process of implementing SuccessMaker. This is a digital learning program we are using in the Title I K-8 schools. It has been very successful in those schools in promoting student achievement. It is very expensive so we were only able to purchase a few licenses, but hope to add to those each year. This will allow these schools to serve students with the greatest academic needs including those students experiencing homelessness and N&D students. Heather explained SuccessMaker. It is a digital learning program that assesses student academic achievement and builds an individualized learning path. There will be five licenses at each non-Title I K-8 building. Heather explained Lowell and Franklin both have site licenses. All other buildings have anywhere from 20 to 40 licenses.

Amanda asked when SuccessMaker will be available. Heather explained we will meet with the principals on November 4. The principals will need to work with the building teams to determine an implementation process. We will need to provide some training and will likely ask the instructional coaches to help with this training. Heather feels it could be January before everyone gets on board. Amanda is concerned there are students that need support. There are students with immediate needs. Heather suggested that Amanda talk with Dave and strategize ways to support students until SuccessMaker is implemented.

Heather explained N&D is allocated the same way as Homeless.

The K-8 and High School budgets are completely separate. This is based on how we apply for the grant. We do have the option to apply for K-12 grant which would basically eliminate all funding to the high schools because the poverty rate is so much lower at the high schools.

We have funding to support the two federal project coordinators. Natalie Jaeger asked about why the high schools are so much lower, Heather suggested it is because of the large population of students. When we look at the feeder pattern data, it changes the calculation significantly because it is based on K-5. We do not look at FREE AND REDUCED applications for high school any longer. This year, we will figure it out twice but normally we would only figure it once.

Parent Involvement is a required set-aside 1% of overall. 95% of that 1% has to go back to the buildings. Through our FRC/FIT coordinators, we spend a great deal more than what is required. However, we take out that 1% and put 5% back at the district level. Sindie and Connie use it to pay for quarterly trainings. That 95% of parent involvement money goes to the buildings and they use it for parent involvement activities. The amount allocated to schools is based on the parent involvement/student amount.

Amanda asked about the extra parent involvement funds that are going to non-Title I buildings. Sindie and Heather explained those were some extra funds from the homeless set-aside and McKinney-Vento grant. It was not enough to add more hours or to provide PD. It turned into less than \$1,000 per building.

Heather explained the Professional Development budget is used to support Title I Instructional Coaches.

DIBELS/Wireless Generations is an assessment given three times per year to assess student literacy skills. It is given to K-3 Through 3rd grade they are learning to read. By 4th grade, they are reading to learn. The version for Title I is an electronic version. Everyone else does a paper/pencil version. The electronic version allows immediate access to data and reports and they are able to adjust their teaching to allow students to learn. It is very costly.

SuccessMaker: There are maintenance fees associated with that. We take it out at the district level.

Supplies: We take a modest amount for the supplies we need at the district level.

Indirect Costs: The requirement is about 3.5% of the overall budget. This covers some of the costs for the folks in the business building - payroll and accounts payable, for example.

The balance goes to the schools. We always try to keep the balance to schools as high as we can so we can allocate as much as possible to the schools.

At the bottom of the page, we can see the amounts allocated to Title I schools. We are required to allocate some funds to private schools based on the number of students that attend the private school that are free and reduced and live in an attendance boundary of a Title I school. The only private schools in Missoula that participate are the Missoula Catholic Schools.

Parent involvement uses funds for literacy lunches, literacy nights, reading nights, etc. This allows schools to inform parents on how they can help students at home.

We have all of our schools listed in order of poverty. Heather explained the chart. Only the number of students that are free and reduced at the private schools are eligible to receive Title I services. We always use the month of February when determining the Title I allocation for consistency purposes. Franklin and Lowell are two of the smallest schools. Their percentage could be really affected when their populations change slightly. Franklin was one of those schools impacted in 2013 by a large decrease.

Heather explained the band of poverty system - based on grouped poverty rates. We have five schools that are eligible for Title I services. If you look at Paxson, you can see they are creeping up. We had some conversations about spreading the funding a little thinner and include Paxson. We listened to the comments and advice from this committee and decided to not include Paxson. We have the choice to fund any schools that are 35% or above. We provide an attendance allocation. The per pupil allocation differs based on the band of poverty. The per pupil allocation is higher for the schools with the greater percentage of free and reduced students. The third column represents the private school allocation. Franklin and Russell do not have any students at private school. This column determines the amount St. Joe's receive.

Heather likes to include an allocation change column so buildings have a sense of how much they will need to adjust based on previous year.

Amanda explained because Willard is a program and not a school, three of the four high schools get Title funding and none of that carries over to the students at Willard. Students are getting money at their home school and not at Willard. Heather explained the funds are supporting a system. Hellgate and Big Sky use the funds to support staffing to reduce class sizes. The Title I classes at Big Sky and Hellgate are much larger than classes at Willard. Willard is an intervention in and of itself. The classes are much smaller than the high schools.

The high school poverty data is based on the projected data. Last year was the first year we used this method. In 2013, we used a feeder pattern method but it was not correct. We came up with a more accurate measure. Heather asked Tony Zook to run a special report that put all 8900 students in a single spreadsheet that indicated the geocodes of the student residence. It includes their elementary, middle school and high school attendance areas. He then put in where they are actually attending middle school; where they are actually attending high school and if they were free and reduced. Heather then put together a pivot table. High schools have open enrollment. Willard is a program. Seeley-Swan students sometimes choose to go to Hellgate. About 25% to 30% of high school students choose to go to a different high school than their boundary school. High school students do not turn in their free and reduce meal applications very well. Our poverty level at the high schools has been much lower and was not giving an accurate reflection. We went to a straight feeder pattern. All high school students living on the Bonner, Clinton, Turah, etc., are going to Hellgate. We assume all the students living in the Hellgate Elementary, DesMet School were attending Big Sky. Sentinel has its own attendance boundary. The big spreadsheet allowed Heather to identify projections. Heather explained the spreadsheet. The feeder schools are easiest to calculate. The MCPS schools were more difficult because the boundaries are not straight forward.

Community Eligibility Provision is only available at the K-8 Title I schools. This is through a Grant from the U.S. Department of Ag. If we have 60% or more students that are receiving Direct Certification benefits like SNAP or TANFF, 100% of students can receive free meals. Heather went from telling principals we would have to still collect forms and then she was told we cannot do that. So, we were told by the State how to calculate the percentage at Title I schools. We take the number of students that receive direct certification X 1.6 and divided by total enrollment. Heather will have these calculations for the December meeting. No free and reduced forms are needed at Title I schools.

The question is do all students at those schools receive SES services?

Natalie was asking how direct certification works at the high schools.

Matt wondered if any of the high schools are eligible. Is Seeley-Swan eligible? Heather explained it can be challenging for some school districts. Some breakeven with the reimbursements they receive.

Natalie asked about applying the Schoolwide application. They will go through the planning process this year. Big Sky and Hellgate are in the process of applying for Schoolwide. It is a year-long process. It

includes many meetings and many staff members for the process of developing Schoolwide plans. It comes with many advantages but it comes with more obligations. It is important to maintain the 40% threshold. Matt wondered if they could choose not to go through the Schoolwide process. Heather feels it would be worth it because she thinks the amounts will increase and not decrease.

Our next meeting is next Tuesday, December 2, 2014 at 6:00 PM.